



**For Immediate Release
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**Contact: Vanessa Gulati
617-626-1119**

STATE HIRES TUFTS UNIVERSITY TO STUDY POND CIRCULATORS ON LAKE COCHITUATE

The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) Lake and Ponds Program today announced that it has hired Tufts University to conduct a study of two SolarBees, solar-powered pond circulators, in Lake Cochituate. The study is intended to determine the effectiveness of the circulators in combating aquatic invasive species (AIS), namely Eurasian and Variable Milfoil, in the lake.

“Invasive plants are a serious problem in Lake Cochituate, and we are using all options available to us at this time,” said DCR Commissioner Stephen H. Burrington. “These circulators could prove to be valuable non-chemical tools for combating this problem, and I’m excited that this study will explore that possibility.”

The SolarBee machines are on loan to DCR free of charge for the duration of the one-year study, courtesy of Pump Systems, Inc., the manufacturer. The machines run entirely on solar power and circulate water to increase oxygen levels. There is anecdotal evidence that the circulators may help reduce the cover and density of invasive aquatic plants; the study will measure any change in the lake’s invasive plant population, and document other effects of the machines, such as changes in water quality and sediments.

The study will start the week of August 28, 2006 and will run for 16 months, including two months of monitoring before the machines are installed (August and September 2006), one year of monthly monitoring, and two months to complete final data analysis (November and December 2007). One machine will be installed in Middle Pond, and one in South Pond. DCR anticipates announcing the study results in December 2007.

DCR hired Tufts to carry out the study based on the university’s outstanding reputation in the field of environmental science, and its proven track record with pond and river restoration projects, including Spy Pond in Arlington and the Aberjona Watershed. The Research Director for the project will be John Durant, Ph.D., P.E. Dr. Durant is an Associate Professor of Civil and Environmental Engineering at Tufts and a registered Professional Engineer in Massachusetts, and has over 20 years of experience in environmental consulting and research.

Since first documented in 2001, invasive plants have spread to over 64 acres of the Lake Cochituate, posing a threat to its native plant population and recreational value. The SolarBee

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS · EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

Department of Conservation and Recreation
251 Causeway Street, Suite 600
Boston MA 02114-2119
617-626-1250 617-626-1351 Fax
www.mass.gov/dcr



Mitt Romney
Governor

Kerry Healey
Lt. Governor

Robert W. Gollidge, Jr., Secretary
Executive Office of Environmental Affairs

Stephen H. Burrington, Commissioner
Department of Conservation & Recreation

study is part of DCR's ongoing efforts to control the lake's invasive species. DCR employs other mechanical and biological control techniques in its control efforts, such as hand-pulling, benthic matting and diver-assisted suction harvesting.

For more information on DCR's Lakes and Ponds Program, please see <http://www.mass.gov/lakesandponds>.

For further information about the SolarBee circulators, please visit <http://www.solarbee.com>.

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